HOLIDAY COSTUMES — SAFE IN THE WORKPLACE?

Particularly at Halloween, it’s a popular tradition in many workplaces to come to work dressed in costume. This can be a lot of fun and liven up the workplace, but don’t let your costume be your downfall. If your costume involves any sort of mask that is placed over your face, don’t wear it while driving. This is illegal as well as dangerous. Be careful with any parts of your costume that are dangling or loose, particularly around stairs, elevators, or machinery with moving or rotating parts. Be cautious of costumes that require high heels or awkward footwear. This can lead to tripping hazards. Costumes that come with weapons are not ideal for the workplace either. Violence in the workplace is a safety concern no matter what the industry. An aggressive or intimidating costume can provoke what may be an already sensitive environment. The bottom line is to have fun, which the event, and to be safe in

- Weapons in the workplace?...Think again.
- Draped, flowing fabric and high heels may look good — but can cause tripping hazards and injury—and stay away from all the jack o’lanterns and candles!
- Masks (and even some wigs) have the potential to inhibit vision and breathing.

HAVE A HAPPY & SAFE HOLIDAY
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY?

Definition:
Workplace safety involves workspace conditions, safety procedures, and more. It revolves around anything that can affect the health and well-being of an employee.

Guidelines:
In addition to following specific safety rules that should be given to you when you start a job, employees should also be given guidelines for safety. Proper safety procedures can help prevent careless accidents and can also prevent lawsuits. Most importantly, though, you can be safe at work by asking questions if you are unsure how something should be done, and by asking for help if you need it. Workplace safety is easy to attain when one has the information needed.

Responsibility:

BOTH THE EMPLOYER AND THE EMPLOYEE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY!

Employers:
Employers should maintain their workspace in a manner that is conducive to a safe environment. Employers should also provide their staff and employees with instructions, guidelines, and rules for what to do for various situations. Employers must provide efficient safety materials for employees to use to prevent injury or unsafe conditions.

Employees:
Employees must abide by their employer’s safety guidelines. They must also take care to pay attention to their own safety as well as their co-workers’ safety. Employees should use the protective equipment that their employers provide, and they should report any potentially harmful or dangerous situation to their employer so it can be taken care of.

SAFETY IS A TEAM EFFORT—IT TAKES ALL OF US TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENT!

SAFETY BEGINS WITH COMMON SENSE

“OH, IT WAS JUST LIKE ANY OTHER DAY AT WORK. EXCEPT FOR THE PART WHERE I SNEEZED BY THE PAPER SHREDDER.”

“It’s the latest innovation in office safety. When your computer crashes, an air bag is activated so you won’t bang your head in frustration.”

“New safety regulations won’t allow us to think outside of the box anymore because boxes have sharp corners.”
HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS FOR THE WORKPLACE

Holidays can be times to relax a bit more at the workplace, but safety sill needs to be kept in mind. Fire, falls, and injuries don’t take vacations, so employees and managers should remain vigilant even during holidays. Decorations, holiday foods, and special activities should all be enjoyed with safety in mind.

HOLIDAY FOODS:
Many people enjoy bringing special foods to work during holiday periods to share with their co-workers. If you do this, be certain that you don’t include nuts in any of your foods, as many people have allergies. It’s nice to include a note listing the ingredients of anything you might bring to work, as many people are vegetarians, vegans, or have restricted diets. Don’t leave perishable foods sitting around the office where they might go bad—that would definitely not make for a pretty picture for the company slide show. And don’t share cups or bottles and risk spreading colds and disease.

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS:
Decorating your workplace for Halloween, Valentine’s Day, or Christmas brings a bit of holiday spirit to the daily grind. Put up your decorations in a safe and healthy way, and everyone will stay happy. Don’t put up decorations that impede traffic flow or block fire exits or fire sprinklers. Never use anything with an open flame. Be careful not to hang crepe paper or any flammable materials close to light bulbs or heating units. Some decorations are poisonous, such as mistletoe and holly berries, so fake plants may be a better option. As with costumes, avoid decorations that involve inappropriate themes or anything that may cause offense or discomfort to anyone who works in your workplace.

HOLIDAY PARTIES:
The office holiday party is an infamous occasion for gaffes and embarrassing behavior. Plan your office party safely and avoid tragedy to this unfortunate mix. Most importantly, make arrangements so that nobody is driving under the influence of alcohol. This can be accomplished by providing cabs, arranging designated drivers, or having a party with no alcohol allowed. If your party is very large, consider hiring security to keep things under control. Whether it’s a company Hoe-Down, BBQ, Bowling Party, or Holiday banquet remember that Safety is everyone’s responsibility.

Successful Holidays
Have Fun
Be Safe
Live (injury free) to tell about it
HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREATING SAFETY TIPS:

Costume Safety—Be sure that costumes don’t become tripping hazards. Children should wear their own well-fitting shoes, even if dress up shoes come with the costume. If the costume has a mask or eye holes, be sure that the holes are big enough that they won’t obstruct the child’s vision; makeup is a safer option. Fasten hats and scarves securely so they won’t slip down and cover the eyes. No matter the costume, applying stripes of reflective tape to the costume and your child’s shoes and treat bag is a good idea. The tape will reflect in the headlights of oncoming cars and make your child easier for drivers to see.

Walking Safety—Children should not go trick-or-treating alone; young children should be accompanied by a responsible adult, and older children should go in a group. Trick-or-treaters should stay on the sidewalks and walk, not run—it lessens the chances of tripping and having collisions. Have them carry flashlights or even incorporate lights into their costumes. Remind them to cross streets at the corners and be careful not to dart between parked cars. Know where they will be going or have them carry a cell phone so they can stay in touch.

Personal Safety—Tell your trick-or-treater that unless they are accompanied by a parent or babysitter, they are under no circumstances to go inside anyone’s house, apartment or vehicle. Trick-or-treaters should confine their activities to homes with the porch lights on as a sign of welcome. They should be careful around lit jack-o’-lanterns, bonfires and candles, particularly if their costumes are billowy or especially flammable.

Candy Safety—All candy should be saved for parents to examine. Anything that is not in its original factory wrapper should be discarded unless it’s from a trusted source.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS & KIDS

Do not obstruct vision; tie hat or scarf securely.

Use cosmetics or wear properly fitted mask.

Costumes, wigs and beards should be flame resistant.

Decorate costumes with reflective tape for better visibility.

Carry flashlight to see and be seen.

Well-fitting costumes and shoes prevent falling.

Examine all treats before eating.

PUMPKIN CARVING—AVOID INJURY:

1) Always use a pumpkin carving tool. Do not use household carving knives. They can be very dangerous.

2) Adults should do the actual carving (especially with any children under age six) and cut in small, controlled strokes, away from themselves.

3) Carve pumpkins in a well-lit, clean and dry area. And be sure to keep the carving knife dry. Any moisture on the tools, hands or table can cause the knife to slip, leading to injuries.

Handling Injuries:

If, despite your best efforts, someone does incur an injury to a finger or hand while carving pumpkins, that American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons recommends:

- The hand be elevated above the heart and direct pressure applied to the wound with a clean cloth to stop the bleeding.

- If continuous pressure doesn’t slow or stop the bleeding after 15 minutes, an emergency room visit may be necessary.

- If there is any numbness in the fingers or an inability to move the fingers, get the injured person to the emergency room immediately.

Go to halloweenmagazine.com to play this interactive game with your kids!
TOPIC: HOLIDAY SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

I have reviewed, discussed and understand each of the topics contained within this Newsletter with my Supervisor, Foreman or Team Lead. I understand that it contains important safety information that as an employee I am expected to understand and follow. I acknowledge that the Newsletter and the information it contains is accessible and available to me at all times through the QSE Manager listed below.

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